

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Upon entry of the above amendment, claim 16 will have been amended and submitted for reconsideration by the Examiner. In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

Initially, Applicant would like to express his appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, and for the indication of the allowability of claims 12-15.

Turning to the merits of the action, the Examiner has rejected claim 16 under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. By the present amendment, Applicant has amended claim 16 to eliminate language inconsistencies therefrom and to thus overcome the only outstanding rejection. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

It is noted that the amendment to claim 16 merely clarifies the subject matter recited in the claim, but does not narrow the scope of the claim and does not raise new issues.

It is also noted that although Applicant has not amended claim 16 in the same way as the suggestion by the Examiner, Applicant has amended claim 16 to eliminate the basis for the rejection by the Examiner.

Applicant further notes that although the status of the present application is after final rejection, the present amendment is appropriate for entry in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 as no new issues are raised thereby, and that Applicant clearly places application into condition for allowance by eliminating the basis for the rejection.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests entry of the present amendment and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection and an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application in due course.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

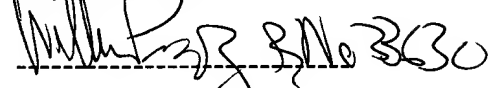
Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believes that he has now done so. Applicant has amended the rejected claim 16 and has resubmitted the same for consideration by the Examiner. With respect to the pending claims, Applicant has eliminated the basis for the rejection. Accordingly, Applicant has provided a clear evidentiary basis supporting the patentability of all claims in the present application and respectfully requests an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application in due course.

The amendment to the claim which has been made in this amendment, and which has not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

Kiyonori SEKIGUCHI

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bruce H. Bernstein', is written over a horizontal dashed line.

Bruce H. Bernstein

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